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ABSTRACT

Following a conference on reading and study skill development in secondary schools, the seven independent schools involved were asked to describe how they develop the skills needed by their students. The resulting report includes a discussion of the problems involved in teaching study skills and offers descriptions of the following: a small school's individualized basic skills program; the rationale and objectives, by grade, of a junior high reading and study skills program; methods for integrating language arts into the curriculum in grades 6 through 12; a language skills program; a reading laboratory; a tutoring program; and a one-room schoolhouse study skills program. A bibliography is included. (MAI)

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READING AND STUDY SKILLS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Occasional Paper
NAIS Teacher Services Committee



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Contents

Preface	v
I. INTRODUCTION	1
"Learning To Fail or Failing To Learn? Here We Go Again . . ." by C. Wilson Anderson, reading specialist, Minneapolis, Minnesota	
II. A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM	3
"On Teaching Study Skills," by Mary Gray Stoner, reading teacher, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	
III. DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME PROGRAMS	10
"One Small School's Attempt," by Alice J. Castelli, The Country School, Madison, Connecticut - 10	
"Reading and Study Skills Program," by Almeda Ambrulevich, Fairfield Public Schools, Fairfield, Connecticut - 11	
"Integrating Language Arts into the Fabric of the Curriculum," by Marie Kirchner Stone, Francis W. Parker School, Chicago, Illinois - 17	
"Language Skills Program," by Mary L. Van Dusen, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts - 26	
"A Reading Laboratory," by Constance Porter, The Seven Hills Schools, Cincinnati, Ohio - 34	
"The Tutoring Assistant Program," by Frances H. Kennedy and Whitney D. Collins, The Spence School, New York, New York - 37	
"One-Room Schoolhouse Program," by Nathaniel Goddard, Stuart Hall, Staunton, Virginia - 44	
IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY	45

Preface

The Teacher Services Committee of the National Association of Independent Schools acts as the service arm of the Academic Committee to assist in the professional growth and development of teachers. The committee presents this report, another one of its occasional papers, in response to requests from participants in the reading and study skills sessions at the 1977 and 1978 NAIS Annual Conferences for further sharing of information.

The committee is indebted to Julie Currie, one of its members and a teacher at Germantown Friends School, in Philadelphia, for collecting the materials published here. In no way does this report represent an evaluation or endorsement of any of the programs discussed.

Readers interested in learning more about any of the programs should write directly to the schools, not to NAIS. To continue discussion of this topic, the committee invites others to submit their ideas, comments, and program descriptions to Julie Currie, 264 West Washington Lane, Philadelphia, Pa. 19144.

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning To Fail or Failing To Learn? Here We Go Again . . .

by

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The past several years have yielded more than the usual crop of prophets of doom, irresponsibility, malpractice, and professional failure to serve our youthful charges well, whether they be in private or public schools.

If one sorts and sifts the gold from the sludge of the well-publicized article "How Schools Fail Our Children" (The New York Times Magazine, Aug. 28, 1977), one is still left with the nagging premise that as school costs go up academic skills go down.

One need not go farther than ACT or College Board scores to see the decline, and one need not look any farther than one's own classroom to see that "the kids don't have the skills we do." In the NBC white paper "Same Pomp, Different Circumstances," the overwhelming difference between the class of 1956 and the class of 1976 was the students' ability to read, write, and spell.

At the 1977 and 1978 NAIS Annual Conferences, groups gathered to discuss the problem. Remember, they were not talking about the dyslexic or learning-disabled student; they were talking about students who in early years have had academic success, consistent skill-building training, and good teaching but have not mastered the levels necessary for success in junior or senior high school. These are the students who have better than average intelligence but reach a plateau in sixth or seventh grade. They

do not read outside of school, they do not seem to assimilate and use study skills, and their recreation is watching television or listening to music.

Some of the areas of agreement from the conference sessions are that skill levels are down for all students; most parents do not read and/or write for recreation; homework, even if assigned, is sometimes not done; there seems to be little carryover among the disciplines; and confusion is caused by the differing philosophies of the "progressive" and the "essentialists" camps on how to build skills and on modes of inquiry, not to mention a serious feeling that "someone else has failed the child" and that "it's not my job to do the dirty work or the initial spadework."

As a result of the conference discussions, several schools were asked to describe how they develop the skills needed by their students. While their accounts may vary in length and amount of detail, one can see obvious similarities and differences in the approaches taken by the seven schools and gain a sense of how much variety of approach is possible.

II. A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE PROBLEM

On Teaching Study Skills

by

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One assumption common among independent schools is that their students know how to learn. While some of them do, many students still need direct instruction in the techniques of learning. This does not mean that they are candidates for remedial work; it means that they need to be taught the techniques for mastery of a particular subject or body of information.

The distinction between remedial and development instruction is significant. Children who need remedial help require individual instruction by a specialist. Because they usually read at one or two grade levels below their year in school, remedial instruction must start at their level of reading ability, no matter what grade they are in.

At some time, however, almost every child needs developmental instruction, which consists of reinforcing previously taught skills and help in acquiring more sophisticated skills, such as notetaking, outlining, skimming and scanning, organization, precis writing, and using the various elements of a textbook. Students need this kind of instruction to make the best uses of resources they find in their various courses and textbooks.

The need for effective study skills may increase as children move through school. Teachers must remember that, as students go from grade to grade, degrees of ability increase in their variety, as do rates of learning and diversity of learning styles. It is almost impossible to anticipate and accommodate all the variables with a single approach, method, or text.

Each student's learning pattern is sufficiently distinct that he must discover how he learns and take part of the responsibility for himself.

Consequently, the teacher's task is not only to help students master content but to help them develop ways of learning that will be self-perpetuating, efficient, and satisfying. Students need to learn to apply concepts and skills not only to similar situations but also to those that are different. Teachers cannot assume that students will automatically "transfer" their skills, see parallels and relationships, or connect one kind of experience with another.

How do you go about establishing a developmental learning program that works well? Having a specialist on hand is an asset. Even so, the faculty must be aware of the importance and need of a developmental approach for all students. Teachers must identify the skills needed for mastery of their courses, and they cannot assume that students have been taught and learned these skills earlier. Each course may stress different techniques and materials--science may depend on graphs, social studies on statistical tables. Some students need to be taught how to read newspapers and periodicals and the details of library and research skills.

The choice of materials presents another set of problems. Some teachers use a single text as the basis for a course regardless of the disparities and diversity within the class. A single book, too easy for some and too hard for others, also runs the risk of presenting only one point of view. In order to use several texts productively, the teacher must look for texts representing different levels of difficulty, not just a group of books of the same complexity. And, though students may be given materials having appropriate levels of vocabulary and abstraction, they still have to be

taught how to use them in order to learn effectively.

For effective learning to take place, students need to be given a purpose and goal by the teacher, if not by the materials. The teacher must provide a framework into which the information to be learned can be placed. Students may also have to review material they already know so that they may relate new materials and ideas to it.

Students need to learn to read different materials in different ways, depending on their purposes. The teacher can help by pointing out the ideas to be discovered from the reading, for example, and then demonstrate the skills to be used, always remembering that certain skills are more useful than others in mastering certain kinds of material. The long-range goal is to "woo" students into independence by giving them techniques and skills they can use on their own.

"Book mining," a useful device for helping students master reading skills and gain some self-reliance, involves not only preteaching new words or words used in specialized senses but also introducing students to reading aids provided by the author. It is easy to assume, mistakenly, that students automatically observe such things as overall format and organization of the text, the author's pattern, table of contents, index, glossary, illustrations, time lines, graphs, and tables.

In addition, it is easy to assume that students will automatically acquire the appropriate intellectual skills for absorbing and responding to the ideas in the material they are reading. Reasoning guides can help students understand the content of a course because they direct attention to important ideas in the material. For such a guide to be useful, however, it must contain open-ended questions and questions with more than one right

answer so that students are stimulated to think critically, generate alternatives, and sort ideas. As this kind of mental activity is provoked, intellectual skills are developed. Again, in developing any skill it is essential to remember the differences among students. Different levels of reasoning guides are just as necessary as a variety of reading materials and teaching styles.

And there are at least three levels of comprehension.

1. The literal level, wherein students know what the author is saying, even though they may not understand its implications; words are decoded and understood, but their overall significance is not.
2. The interpretative level requires the reader to look for connections and relationships within the material; meaning is derived, but that meaning remains within the text.
3. The applied level takes what the author has said and what the author means by what he says and uses it in some other way. The reader relates what he has read to previous knowledge and experience, possibly producing some new ideas.

If students are to learn well, the teacher must give them materials that require all three types of comprehension.

To help determine students' understanding of what they read, teachers find the Cloze procedure helpful. In this procedure, which is adaptable to almost any subject, the reader is asked to fill in spaces where words have been deleted. Passages should contain at least 50 blanks, each indicated by an equal space about 15 typewritten characters long. Students should be told to read the passage all the way through before trying to fill in the blanks with words. They should be allowed to practice this technique before it is used as a measure of their skill. It helps to leave the initial sentence or paragraph intact, particularly in unfamiliar material, so that the reader has a frame of reference. The teacher can judge students'

understanding by analyzing the words they insert (synonyms are acceptable).

Another major use of the Cloze procedure is for instruction. Class discussion of people's reasons for choosing particular words can be illuminating. The question here is not what words they chose, but why. The substitutions reveal a great deal about individual students' understanding of a concept.

An adaptation of the Cloze procedure is the maze technique. Here, three alternative words, or foils, are provided--the correct word, an incorrect word from the same grammatical class, and an incorrect word similar in configuration but from a different class. Students select what they think is the correct word. Sixty to 75 per cent accuracy denotes reading with comprehension. A reader whose score is over 85 per cent can probably manage the material independently.

Another study skill that teachers often assume their students have mastered is efficient listening and notetaking. Organizing and recording oral material is a complex task involving memory, selectivity, sequencing, and easy use of pen or pencil. The order or pattern of materials varies enormously from subject to subject and speaker to speaker. Often, in a lecture situation, the material cannot be "replayed." Students must determine immediately what is important, what they should write down, and how to record it so that it will have meaning and be useful to them later. The teacher must help students develop this important skill. Listening guides that take into account the nature of the material and variations in student listeners can help students perfect their own listening skills.

Outlining, making time lines, and drawing diagrams of relationships are other tools that most students do not stumble upon by themselves. Once

taught in one subject, however, these skills are transferrable and can help students see patterns and relationships in other subjects and content areas. These tools are particularly helpful if students master them before they are asked to write a paper. Otherwise, teachers complain about their "lack of focus," "poor organization," and "fuzziness."

Different subjects lend themselves to different forms of order--chronological, cause and effect, ascending or descending, analytical, or heuristic. Children need to be taught specifically how to analyze material, how to organize material from different sources, how to synthesize it, and how to interpret it intelligibly.

Another valuable skill for students is typing. How information is presented often affects how well it is understood. Many students find that errors in their work show up better when it is typed. The act of typing is an efficient way to make students conscious of organization. Many students also find that typing helps them review materials.

The ideas described here are not new or radical. They are only a beginning. The emphasis is on the need for teachers to have appropriate materials available for each student and to teach the necessary learning strategies within each subject or content area.

Many factors need to be taken into account in establishing a developmental skills program. While some students, faculty members, and parents may find the idea that such programs are necessary at the secondary level threatening, it need not be. Teachers must understand that this approach is useful for all students, not just those with blatant needs. They must view time spent on developmental learning not as detracting from their major goal of teaching a particular subject but as a way of supplementing

learning and increasing their students' efficiency.

Parents need to be informed about how important it is for their children to develop different kinds of reading and study approaches, and that skills vary among the different subjects. A developmental skills program does not mean that the whole school is "going remedial."

Most important, students need to learn to vary their approaches to reading and studying. They need to realize that developing study skills and versatility in handling different materials will improve their academic performance.

III. DESCRIPTIONS OF SOME PROGRAMS

One Small School's Attempt

by

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I am delighted that the National Association of Independent Schools is seriously looking into programs and methods designed to promote greater achievement by secondary school students in the areas of reading and study skills. The problems many students are having in these areas have become nationally pronounced.

Although new laws have been passed to provide for the seriously learning-disabled student, they do not encompass the large group of students whose problems may express themselves in poor organization and inadequate reading and writing skills. We see increasing numbers of parents turning to independent schools for help.

We are a rather small school serving about 150 students from prekindergarten through eighth grade. One of our basic goals is to provide the basic skills needed for effective communication. The development of good writing skills and the ability to read perceptively are major avenues we employ to achieve this goal. Some bright students come to us who have more than the usual difficulty acquiring these language skills. We have developed a program staffed by two people who are trained in the field of learning disabilities. We maintain a schedule that varies with the individual needs of the student, providing support outside of the classroom on a regular basis. We have found the 1:1 or 2:1 ratio most effective.

Our remediation is based on the Orton-Gillingham approach to language arts. We also use Beth Slingerland, Lydia Duggin, and the Gallistel, Ellis, & Fischer materials, depending upon the needs of the individual. In addition, we have a variety of supplementary resources including student-staff-developed materials and strategies.

We believe that visual inefficiency can contribute to reading problems. When indicated, we request a thorough visual exam and provide follow-up visual training if necessary.

We have experienced success with our present program; however, we have not been entirely satisfied with its organization. This spring our board of directors supported a decision to create a department of language development. The board also formally approved a policy of accepting a limited number of carefully selected children who have demonstrated that they need special programming in order to succeed academically. This coming year will be our first experience with a more integrated program, which will include written prescriptions for each student and more coordination with the upper school curriculum.

Reading and Study Skills Program

by

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In the Fairfield Public Schools, we have a chairman of reading K-12 and a chairman of language arts K-12. Although reading is one aspect of language arts as a discipline, we are organized so that one person concentrates on the reading program while the other works on the rest of the language arts program. Of course, the two work very closely.

One dimension of the reading and study skills program is our commitment to making every teacher a teacher of reading in his or her discipline. When the English language arts department revised its freshman-sophomore program, reading as it applies to language arts was included as one of the strands of the program. In addition, the reading staff has helped with the implementation of this strand by doing workshops with teachers in our department and in the science and social studies departments as well.

Throughout our revised freshman-sophomore program, there is attention to the skills of thinking inherent in reading and essential for good expression, both oral and written. There is still much to do. Now for the programs themselves.

Reading - Grades 7-8

Rationale

Learning to read is a continuous process, an art to be developed through the years. Many different kinds of skills are involved in this development. These can be improved and refined within the limits of the individual's reading maturity.

A range of developmental reading has as its aim the development of the full range of reading capacities based on a step-by-step approach directed toward improving each individual's achievement in reading efficiency and versatility. Reading can become a pleasurable experience.

Objectives for 7th grade reading

1. To increase the pupil's skill in noting and remembering precise directions, both written and oral
2. To establish a scientific pattern of study skills which improve comprehension and retention through application of the SQ3R pattern

3. To help the pupil become skilled in locating information found in the table of contents, the index, reference books, and the dictionary

4. To increase vocabulary power by developing an awareness of the influence of context on the meaning of words

5. To develop the ability to interpret graphs, maps, diagrams, charts, and similar graphic material

6. To develop skill in the ability to distinguish between main ideas and supporting information in stories, articles, and paragraphs

7. To provide practice in using the learned reading skills, thus making reading an efficient and enjoyable experience

Objectives for 8th grade reading

1. To increase the pupil's awareness for efficient reading by recognition and practice of the precise skills involved

2. To expand the pupil's ability to use discrimination in choice of meaning for words with multiple meanings, unfamiliar words, and words used in context

3. To increase the pupil's facility in recognizing the main thought of the paragraph and in identifying details which support the main idea

4. To develop the pupil's ability to apply organizational skills while listening to dictated material

5. To increase the pupil's capacity for efficient reading through the use of mechanical reading instruments

6. To direct the pupil's ability to find main ideas and details, to notetaking and outlining

7. To increase the pupil's ability to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words by dividing the words into meaningful parts

8. To help the pupil develop facility in gaining deeper understanding and greater appreciation of the author's purpose and meaning through direct study

Grade 9 - Study Skills

Rationale

Since the high school curriculum is basically exploratory and requires much diverse reading, the student needs to learn to direct his reading

activities in a way which is appropriate to the specific material and to the purpose for which he is reading. Therefore, he has a right to receive instruction which will enable him to use basic and functional reading skills as essential tools for efficient learning.

The goal of this program is to help each student raise his level of reading competency by developing the study skills and attitudes necessary for obtaining knowledge through self-directed inquiry.

Objectives for 9th grade study skills

Cognitive - The student should:

1. Establish an appropriate and definite purpose for every reading task through preview and question
2. Identify and use the author's organization as an aid to understanding and remembering what he reads
3. Write meaningful, organized notes, incorporating main ideas with relevant details based on both reading and listening
4. Demonstrate his comprehension of material read and his perception of interrelationships between ideas by reciting relevant ideas succinctly in oral or written form
5. Use structure of words to identify and estimate the meanings of words
6. Manipulate structure of words to alter their meanings and function
7. Recognize and use all types of context clues to arrive at word meanings
8. Understand the connotations as well as the denotations of words
9. Identify shift words and understand the significance of these words for reader comprehension
10. Identify key words and understand the effectiveness of these words in analyzing the intent of the author
11. Read critically to recognize the author's point of view and its relationship to what he writes
12. Draw accurate inferences and conclusions on the basis of his reading and experience

Affective - The student should:

1. Accept himself as an individual of worth as he experiences self-confidence in independent study
2. Adopt an active rather than a passive approach to the printed page
3. Assume an attitude of inquiry concerning aspects of value, quality, and accuracy of what is read
4. Suspend judgment and use rational standards in reaching conclusions and in determining the worth of what is read
5. Weigh the ideas acquired through reading for personal and/or social value
6. Seek to broaden his interests, tastes, and experiences in and through reading
7. Think critically and recognize attitudes in himself that might distort his comprehension

Psychomotor - The student should:

1. Use the basic decoding and comprehension skills efficiently and effectively.
2. Use SPQ4R (preview, question, read, reflect, recite, review) efficiently in attacking all study assignments
3. Use effective reading techniques in approaching diverse reference materials
4. Be flexible in adapting rate and reading techniques to purpose and nature of materials
5. Review his recitation to assess the thoroughness of his understanding and recall
6. Establish the habit of periodic review as a means of reinforcing learning
7. Develop techniques to enlarge his understanding and ability to apply specific word meanings
8. Demonstrate the ability to approach varied types of tests effectively and efficiently
9. Develop the skill technique of skimming to gain a general impression of the content and organization of a selection

College Skills - Grades 11-12

Rationale

The skills of reading are similar at every grade level. They are explored to greater depth, performed with greater facility, and refined to greater exactness at the upper levels. In the junior-senior course, the reading materials are more difficult, there is increased emphasis on the need for critical reading and thinking, on analytical reading and interpretation, on development of vocabulary, on instruction and practice in speeded reading, and on the skills needed for the taking of examinations for college entrance, college boards, or job applications.

Objectives for college skills

The student should:

1. Apply the basic skills efficiently and effectively: phonetic analysis; comprehension and interpretation skills; locational skills
2. Use Formula SQ4R in selection, chapter, content area textbook as an aid to efficient study
3. Apply organizational skills as an aid to efficient study: main idea, supporting details, sequence of events or steps in a process; outlining, notetaking, summarizing
4. Apply the skills of notetaking from lectures, from books, from combined sources of information, and in research
5. Understand and apply research techniques
6. Recognize and apply aids to critical reading: author's pattern, propaganda techniques, evaluation of material, analytical reading
7. Adjust speed to purpose: skimming and scanning--practice with newspaper; ability to vary rate according to purpose of reading and type of material; increasing reading rate
8. Use effective study habits: methods of studying various types of books and textbooks; how to concentrate; retention of facts
9. Recognize key words as they delimit the task of taking tests: various types of tests, examinations

Integrating Language Arts into
the Fabric of the Curriculum, Grades 6-12

by

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Since the written word survives as the common denominator of academic learning, teachers of a number of disciplines other than English should teach the written word. This logical and innocent assumption can be a revolutionizing concept for curriculum development in secondary school.

It was in our school when the foreign language, history, and science departments were asked to incorporate the teaching of writing, reading, listening, and speaking into their curricula. The very teachers who grumbled in the corridors about their students' inability to read the physics text or to write a history research essay offensively postulated that the teaching of writing and reading was the sole responsibility of the English department.

English teachers argued that they were teaching both arts, and indeed teaching them well, but were seeing very little transfer of this learning from one discipline to another. The opposition moved to the defensive position, reminding English teachers that their departments were already teaching writing and reading. In truth, the science, history, and foreign language teachers finally admitted that they were simply giving writing and reading assignments. The debate revealed that writing and reading are the domain of all departments that use the printed page as the dominant medium of learning. On this basis, the math, visual and performing arts, and physical education departments were exempted, for their medium is essentially nonverbal.

Finally, agreeing on the original assumption, the four departments attempted the enormous undertaking of slowly and deliberately incorporating into the fabric of the curriculum one language art at a time--the first year writing, the second reading, the third listening, and the fourth year speaking.

This is a story of a pattern of curriculum change that attempts to integrate the language arts into the curricula of several departments in order to ensure the life of the written word, not to continue to lament its decline. The accent is more on its success than on failure, more about possibilities than about pains.

The time of the story covers three years and anticipates another year of development before overall refinement. Focus, pacing, and rhythm and timing are crucial if this kind of curricular change is to work. The focus is established through agreed-upon guidelines and objectives; the pacing is slow and deliberate; and the rhythm and timing are determined by how the faculty can work together to train teachers and convert classroom strategies.

In the guidelines set out for writing and developmental reading, we agreed that the teaching of these skills must be combined with the course content rather than taught separately. When and where separate support classes were essential, we agreed that they must buttress and/or emanate from regular classes and that they should eventually go out of existence as regular classroom teachers gained new competence.

We began with the integration of writing, since the English department had over the years developed a significant writing program and was able to provide not only curriculum but substantial leadership for in-service workshops, team teaching, and demonstration classes. Also, the

teachers of the other disciplines felt that they were better able to teach writing than reading.

While the writing curriculum of the English department includes expository, autobiographical, narrative, and descriptive writing, we concentrate interdepartmentally on expository writing because it establishes an analytical model for communication that is readily adaptable to the writing required in other departments. The expository model is prescriptive in nature, and the method of teaching is based on Jerome Bruner's idea of a spiral curriculum, which introduces concepts at the earliest possible level and expands the performance and scope of these concepts in stages to meet growing abilities.

The actual teaching of the sentence, paragraph, and essay remains part of the English curriculum in grades 6-8. In grade 9, we offer an interdepartmentally team-taught course required of all freshmen at the beginning of the year for one trimester, and in the second and third trimesters expository writing is taught as a separate English course. In this way, the teaching of expository writing is incorporated in the curriculum of four departments with consistent form but with different applications.

In grades 10-12, the teaching of expository writing is part of the curriculum of all four departments. Additionally, the English department offers a separate elective course in expository writing for those students who wish more help. The four departments assume cooperative responsibility for teaching narrative, autobiographical, or descriptive writing in a variety of combinations that divides writing objectives. The English department continues to offer writing electives in journalism, creative writing, and rhetoric at upper grade levels. The following curriculum outline shows how we organized to achieve this integration of writing.

Overview of the Writing Program, Grades 6-12

A. Expository writing

1. Grades included: 6-12
2. Departments involved: English, history, science, foreign language
3. Objectives
 - a. To organize ideas for writing
 - b. To reason inductively and deductively
 - c. To formulate a judgment or thesis
 - d. To support thesis with fact, example, authority, incident, quotations
 - e. To define
 - f. To analyze or explain
 - g. To compare and contrast
 - h. To argue
 - i. To persuade
4. Students: all students are required to achieve these objectives through different departmental approaches. Advanced course offered in rhetoric.

B. Autobiographical writing

1. Grades included: 9 and 11
2. Departments involved: all departments
3. Objectives
 - a. To write for self-discovery
 - b. To elevate concept of self
4. Students: approach introduced in grade 9 English. Autobiographies must be written by all grade 11 students with their advisers (all teachers are advisers) as a requirement for the college counselor.

C. Narrative writing

1. Grades included: 6-12
2. Departments involved: English, history
3. Objectives
 - a. To write for the joy of creation
 - b. To create a dominant impression
 - c. To interpret an event and record it (see Bibliography, below, item A.7)

4. Students: basic skill required of all students, grade 9; history and English, elective course in middle school; and advanced course offered in creative writing

D. Descriptive writing

1. Grades included: 6-12
2. Departments involved: English, science
3. Objectives
 - a. To learn to use all the senses
 - b. To learn to observe objectively, accurately, and completely (the science teacher teaches observation in English class and the English teacher focuses on writing)
 - c. To use prescriptive paragraph with topic sentence, details, and clincher
4. Students: basic skill required of all students. Advanced courses offered in creative writing and journalism as electives.

Integrating writing into the fabric of the curriculum achieves some significant results. Students benefit from the use of the same analytical model for writing an essay of literary analysis in English and foreign language classes, a report on a science experiment, or a research essay for history. The amount of writing required increases, and the consciousness of the same analytical process applied differently in several disciplines is heightened.

With this new awareness and knowledge of writing, teachers are becoming better critics. They evaluate essays more critically, going beyond the usual "nice essay." Since each department has specific writing objectives, the responsibility for teaching writing skills is assumed by several departments. The transfer of teaching enhances the transfer of learning.

For integrating reading into the curriculum, the rationale was similar to that for writing, but the approach was different and far more difficult. We had no built-in curriculum or staff because, unlike our efforts

to teach writing, we had English teachers teaching literature but not reading per se. The plan therefore required a developmental reading teacher to train faculty members through workshops, team teaching, and demonstration classes.

In grade 6, reading was incorporated into the English and social studies classes, since our teachers, like most sixth-grade teachers, had been trained as teachers of elementary grades and thus knew how to teach reading. There, the developmental reading teacher acts as a consultant. In grades 7 and 8, however, separate developmental reading courses had to be devised to buttress other disciplines. In the first trimester of grade 9, we return to the grade 6 model with the objectives of advancing reading skills of ninth graders and of training teachers how to teach developmental reading. In grades 10-12, the developmental reading teacher works with the science, history, English, and foreign language departments to design materials for different levels of reading difficulty and to apply the reading process to different content areas.

Because our teachers realized that reading, unlike writing, is a process having no content of its own, we wanted separate reading classes that would complement rather than substitute for the teaching of reading in all curricular areas. We decided that developmental reading should be devoted to the improvement and advancement of literal, critical, and appreciative reading and not to speed reading or to learning disabilities. (We reserved work on remediation and learning disabilities for some combination of specialists in and out of school.) Separate reading classes focus on the act of reading, using materials from all disciplines as well as newspapers, magazines, recipes, directions, graphs, and blueprints,

with emphasis on variety to improve literal and critical reading.

The four different departments are responsible for the application of those skills to their disciplines. The prime goal of each department is to teach reading in its content area. As this becomes more apparent, students begin to realize that a primary document in science reads differently from a history text or a novel. Each department also concentrates on critical reading as well as trying to get the student to read with appreciation. We asked ourselves, "What good is it if the student reads science texts well but never picks up a copy of Scientific American, or if he reads a history book well but never reads history on his own?"

Our curricular floor plan shows the placement of separate developmental reading classes and integrated reading classes. The reading model differs from the writing model but still confirms Bruner's idea of a spiral curriculum.

Grade 6: All integrated classes

English and social studies teachers teach reading in their classes, with the developmental reading teacher acting as a resource
The science teacher teaches reading in and for science

Grade 7: Separate developmental reading classes and integrated classes

Fiction reading taught in English class
Science reading taught in science class, with developmental reading teacher as a resource
History reading taught in history class
Separate developmental reading classes offered by specialist
English and developmental reading class team taught one day a week
History and developmental reading class team taught one day a week

Grade 8: Same as grade 7

Grade 9: Separate language arts class

Reading in English, history, foreign language, and science

Grades 10-12: In-service meetings of developmental reading teacher with English, foreign language, history, and science departments

We are still working to improve the teaching of writing and reading. The results, far from our desired goals, have nevertheless raised the status of the written word appreciably, and in various ways have raised the consciousness of students and teachers for reading different materials in different ways. Literal, critical, and appreciative reading have been advanced. We are now beginning to work on listening and speaking.

Reading and writing classes have been added. Teaching strategies in English, foreign language, history, and science have changed. The curricula of the departments have been revised. And students are reading independently in small groups, with tutors, in more courses. A complete list of all the books required in all the departments in grades 5-12 is now available to everyone, and bibliographies for summer reading are mailed to all students. Reading profiles based on normed tests, the Criterion-Referenced Tests, and reading interviews are available to all teachers of students in grades 6-9. Reading meetings with English, foreign language, history, and science teachers take place frequently. About a dozen seniors are tutoring seventh and eighth graders. Departments are team teaching reading classes. The English, history, and science departments are developing materials for different levels of reading difficulty. Almost all upperclassmen use the SQ4R (survey, question, read, reflect, recite, review) method of reading in courses in grades 10-12 (see Bibliography, below, item C.4). Interest, skill, and awareness are on the upsurge.

Our belief that writing and reading form the common strand among our four subject areas has created a more cohesive faculty, not one in which

the battle scars have turned to beauty marks, but a faculty that is beginning to work together on a problem it faces in common: the survival of the printed word.

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Language Skills Program

by

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I. Who Is in the Program?

Students who are referred to me are usually failing or receiving poor marks in one or more courses. They are students

- A. Who despite good schooling continue to have serious difficulty in reading or writing, or in learning a foreign language, or with some combination of the underlying language skills needed to do well in history, English, or language courses. Many of these students are described as "dyslexic" (dys = trouble with, lex = word; students having normal intelligence and good schooling but still have not learned on a level commensurate with their intelligence).
- B. Who have related or unrelated difficulties in math.
- C. Who have a poor educational background, with little training in word, sentence, or paragraph structure.
- D. Who have poor organizational skills and cannot set up good study

procedures or use their time well despite efforts of classroom teachers and house counselors to help them.

E. Who have some combination of language and math and study needs.

II. How Do They Enter the Program Each Term?

A. By referral of any teacher, student, or administrator. There are about 40 new referrals made each trimester.

B. By continuing from the previous term. Usually, I do not work with new students until they are referred to me by themselves or other teachers or administrators. I see about 50 students a term.

III. How Do I Learn Which Students May Need Supportive Help Before They Are Referred?

A. By reviewing entrance applications of new students.

1. Previous test results may show

- a. Spelling, language, and/or math scores well below other scores in reading and understanding of subject matter.
- b. SSAT results with low scores overall--below 50th percentile.
- c. Low reading score--30th percentile or lower
- d. Differences of 30 percentile points between verbal and quantitative scores

2. Indications in student entrance essay or student-written interview form, or in teacher or parent recommendations, of poor reading, writing, spelling, organizational skills, handwriting, or previously diagnosed language disabilities.

B. Through preliminary testing. A 45-word spelling test is given

to all ninth graders and all new tenth graders during the first week of school in the fall. Since the test has become an accurate predictor of the students who will be referred to me by foreign language or English teachers by the end of the fall term for help in writing, spelling, or language structure, I send the names of the students misspelling 20 or more words to instructors to alert them that these students are likely to need extra help.

- C. By further testing and follow-up. In the fall, particularly, but also at the beginning of the winter and spring terms, as far as possible, I see new students whom I think may need help, and I follow up on more recent referrals.

I like to spend a minimum of three hours with each new referral, as follows:

1 hour, discussing the student's background
courses
needs
study skills
interests

1 1/2 hours testing, formal or informal

1/2 hour reviewing results with student
planning with him or her next step,
if any

Through informal reading and writing and study assignments, I can usually learn more about a student's weaknesses in

word recognition
reading comprehension
listening
memorizing
structuring assignments
concentration
sentence writing
punctuation
spelling
handwriting

In addition, my talking with the student and the referring teacher and my reading teachers' comments usually give the information needed for formulating a plan that will help the student survive in his difficult courses and help him learn basic skills needed for overall improvement.

All too often, I am too busy to spend even the minimum three hours required to evaluate a student's needs. Ideally, I would like to have five or six hours for testing and working out a plan with each student.

IV. What Are the Program Options?

A. Tutorial sessions

1. Groups of one to three students meeting four times a week; course credit given. For students in serious difficulty in grades 10-12, tutorial work is geared to their needs. I attempt to fill specific needs in vocabulary, writing, and reading while teaching specific learning strategies for other courses as needed.
2. Groups of one to three students meeting two times a week for five to 15 sessions; no credit given. For students in grades 10-12 whose needs are not as severe and who are taking a regular course load, but who can benefit from help in learning in a specific area. Work may include

specific sentence writing
correction of sentence errors on
English papers
punctuation exercises
notetaking and studying for
history tests

writing answers in essay form
organizing vocabulary or grammar
study in a foreign language

Sometimes, time is spent on the more general concepts of organization, of study time, of concentration, and of motivation.

In these tutorials, I often see students twice a week to follow up on work covered and skills practiced in a previous term, when we were meeting together four times a week. In these sessions, I may also see students who need more intensive work, but because of scheduling limitations cannot see me or I them for more sessions.

B. Small-group instruction

1. English 16, Language Skills, meeting four times a week; credit given. Catalogue description:

"This course is designed for those students [in grade 9] who need supplementary help in overcoming weaknesses in reading, writing, spelling and vocabulary. By studying the structure of words and sentences and by practicing the patterns of pronunciation, students can learn to understand language better and use it more effectively. Specific assignments are geared to the needs of each student."

At present, one group of six students, five of them ninth graders, are in English 16. Work is on developing basic reading, writing, and study skills needed before they move on to the tenth-grade English course. These students may have poor educational background or may have had good schooling but are weak in handling language.

2. Spelling class, a group of six to 12 students meeting two times a week; no credit given. Students learn to improve

spelling by understanding the structure of words, through knowledge of spelling rules and generalizations, roots, prefixes, suffixes. Correct pronunciation or overpronunciation is emphasized as an aid for learning difficult words. Daily testing follows analysis of words.

This class is open to anyone and is advertised through other English classes. All students missing 20 words or more on the fall spelling test are strongly urged to attend unless they are getting help in another class or tutorial session.

3. Sentence improvement, a group of six to 12 students meeting two times a week; no credit given. Students learn to recognize and correct sentence errors in diction, syntax, and punctuation. Students use English or history papers, summaries of newspaper articles, and English achievement test exercises.

- C. Large-group instruction: English 18, Efficient Reading, one group of 20 students, eleventh and twelfth graders, meeting four times a week; course credit given. Catalogue description:

"Primarily for Upper Middlers and Seniors, a course for increasing reading speed and comprehension using the Harvard Reading Course with supporting exercises in writing and vocabulary."

V. How Is Learning in the Program Shared?

- A. With students--I attempt to help each student understand his difficulties and the steps needed to progress. I also try to help him see some aspects of his life in school as successful. I may help a student in selecting courses. I may refer him to one of the personal counselors at the school for further counseling.
- B. With other teachers--I may meet with all of a student's teachers to

help them formulate plans to provide more structure in a student's courses. I may meet with one teacher to work out specific teaching strategies for one course. I may meet with another teacher to find out what particular areas the teacher feels I can cover in tutorial sessions.

- C. With parents--I write to parents to alert them that their son or daughter may need extra help, and that there will be extra charges for tutorial work. I try to share with them what I know about the student's specific difficulties and what suggestions I or others have made for program modifications. Sometimes, I discuss with parents the need to look at other schools for their son or daughter.
- D. With the school in general--I am involved in school activities, admissions procedures, and coaching in an effort to have a variety of contacts with a larger population than I see through the Language Skills Program.

VI. What Are Charges to Students for the Program?

Students are charged for tutorial sessions of one to four students by the following schedule:

1 student, each session	\$10.00 per student
2 students, each session	7.00 per student
3 students, each session	5.00 per student
4 students, each session	3.50 per student

Presently, there is no charge for classes of five or more or for testing.

VII. Who Staffs the Program?

- A. Regular faculty--I am the full-time faculty member who does testing, tutoring, consulting, class work, and coaches Search and Rescue.
- B. Part-time tutorial help--part-time help, one or two hours a day, has

been made available by using faculty wives to tutor students whose needs are not severe and whose parents are willing to pay for extra services.

- C. Student tutors--This winter, two of my former students helped me with the spelling class. After we met in a group of 12 to go over generalizations, we split up into small groups for word analysis and testing. Student tutors each handled two other students very well.

VIII. What Are the Plans for Further Program Development?

- A. Expand English 18, the present reading course for eleventh and twelfth graders, to a third term. Reading and study skills needed for American history might be emphasized for one term.
- B. Develop a language learning short-term course for certain new ninth and tenth graders to take as they begin foreign language study at Andover. The course work would be designed to help students understand and use the grammatical concepts being developed concurrently in Latin, German, French, or Spanish classes. In addition, students would have a chance to experiment and practice different memorizing techniques.
- C. Develop better means of analyzing math disabilities. Expand materials and instruction for remediation in math.
- D. Coordinate more closely the planning, scheduling, content, and evaluation of the options of the Language Skills Program with skills courses in other departments.

A Reading Laboratory

by

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Acknowledging that the competent, efficient use of reading skills is central to completing successfully the academic program offered by the school, Seven Hills School offers the services of a reading laboratory and a director to help students acquire the necessary reading and related language skills. In addition to this basic premise, a further assumption is that the ability to read with ease and pleasure has lifelong value and that a special effort may be required to help some students develop this ability.

Presently, our reading lab is in session formally five times during an eight-period day and serves a total of 60 to 70 students during one week. The sessions are organized as follows.

Courses

1. Advanced Developmental Reading: 3 sessions per week; 1 semester

An elective (no credit; credit may be arranged on a contract basis for any student enrolled in any part of the reading lab program) open to students in grades 10-12 who want to become more efficient and more highly skilled in reading comprehension and rate. Basic reading skills are already well established.

2. Improving Reading: 3 sessions per week; 1 semester

An elective (no credit; credit may be arranged on a contract basis for any student enrolled in any part of the reading lab program) open to students in grades 8-12 whose primary need is better comprehension skills. Although rate is a secondary concern, records reveal the positive effect of improved comprehension on the rate of reading.

3. Language Arts: 5 sessions per week; both semesters

A requirement for any student in grade 7 and 8 who has been advised not to take a foreign language until grade 9, each course is designed to augment the student's knowledge, use, and awareness

of the nature of the English language in the areas of spelling, grammar, usage, and punctuation, not only as preparation for a successful experience with a foreign language, but also to ameliorate serious deficits in his use of his own language (reading, writing, speaking, listening).

Individualized sessions

The remaining formal sessions each day are open to any students who need more specialized, concentrated work in the areas of spelling, writing, word attack skills, vocabulary development, basic reading comprehension, grammar, and study skills, including note-taking and test-taking skills. Students are assigned to attend several sessions per week (two to five), depending on individual need and the amount of time available in their schedules. A maximum of seven students may be scheduled in one session.

As a result of scheduling for individual needs, the lab sessions, with the exception of the 11 sessions used for courses, have a completely different combination of students each day. Consequently, each of these students' programs must be totally individualized, with the student's success depending not only upon adequate diagnosis and prescription by the lab director, but also, significantly, upon the student's motivation and interest in solving his reading and/or language-related problems, his ability to initiate learning activities, and his willingness to assume his share of responsibility for his own progress.

Enrollment in the individualized sessions of the reading lab is a two-step process, which can occur at any time during the year. First, a referral is sent to the reading lab director from an individual faculty member, from the principal as the result of a joint faculty recommendation, from parents, or from the student himself. The director then arranges for an initial evaluation, using the Educational Records Bureau test scores (our admissions test), the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, the Biometric Eye

Movement Analysis, and any other readily available diagnostic data. The student is strongly encouraged to enroll if his scores are in the 6th stanine or below in comprehension or vocabulary tests. In some instances, enrollment is mandatory. Depending upon the needs of the student enrolled, further diagnosis could include any of the following: Lincoln Diagnostic Spelling Test, Word Attack Skills Test, an oral reading test, and informal diagnostic teaching methods.

Even though consumable materials are purchased by the students, an extremely wide range of materials is available within the lab that has been paid for by state aid funds. For example, for the appropriate student an entire (as well as a partial) Educational Development Laboratories program is available that includes the controlled reader, the tachistoscope, audio-visual materials for word attack skills and dictionary skills, listening tapes, a paperback library, study skills materials, and eye motility training material.

In the area of study skills, students find the Center for the Humanities programs well planned, practical, and stimulating, particularly those on test-taking techniques and notetaking. For students with serious problems in spelling and word attack skills, a multitude of materials is available and assigned to each student depending on his level of skill, interest, motivation, and maturity. These students, especially, are encouraged to use a multisensory approach to remediate poor spelling habits and to increase sight vocabulary, word knowledge, and word attack skills.

After the student completes the initial evaluation, understands the rationale for his program, and adjusts to the lab procedures and equipment, he is ready, if well motivated, to undertake responsibility for 75 to 80

per cent of his daily activities. He is encouraged to contribute insights he has gained into the specific nature of his reading behavior so that, in effect, he perceives and delineates his own particular problems and actively participates in the plans for eradicating them. The overall effect of this type of program fosters independence and self-reliance in the student while allowing the lab director time to help build the morale and self-image of less well-motivated students.

The design of the Seven Hills reading lab stresses the dignity of the individual, the relation between his positive self-image and successful academic experiences, his need to develop responsibility for his own pursuit of knowledge and skills, and his right to develop intellectually, as aided by reading and other verbal skills, to his fullest potential.

The Tutoring Assistant Program

by

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"My daughter draws very well, but why is her spelling so dreadful?"

"Two of my top math students hate to read. What can we do?"

These are two typical questions being asked by parents and teachers across America today. Their concerns are cresting in a wave of "Back to Basics," and many schools are now revising their curricula to ensure that all their students learn the basic skills. Yet teachers note that, while some students find reading, writing, and spelling equally easy, most need

This article on the Tutoring Assistant Program is adapted, with permission, from the forthcoming TAP Staff Manual, to be published by Walker Educational Book Corp.

extra help in one area or another, some in several areas. Many teachers find that they do not have enough time to give individual attention to all the students who need it in order to master the basic language skills.

To meet this need, the Spence School established its Learning Research Center in 1972, directed by Dr. Jan Duker, and began to develop the Tutoring Assistant Program (TAP). TAP, developed with the help of a generous grant from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, is being tested in both private and public schools. The program is designed to provide effective individual supplementary teaching in basic verbal skills for students who have considerable difficulties in reading, spelling, writing, and vocabulary as well as for the larger number of students who need help in only one skill area.

Using TAP, a school can provide tutoring for the less successful students, who will fall farther and farther behind unless they receive individual instruction geared to each one's particular needs. It can also provide tutoring for able students--the math whiz or the computer expert--who find reading, writing, or spelling difficult and may have come to dislike any learning that involves those skills.

TAP enables a school to give this wide range of students the individual instruction they need by increasing the number of effective individual teaching hours that a remedial staff can provide. Yet using TAP does not increase a school's remediation budget, because the program trains volunteers to be tutors. With the aid of TAP's tutor-training program, supervision systems, and specially designed curriculum materials, volunteers can extend the professional remediation staff's impact to about twice as many students without increased cost to the school.

Problems of volunteer tutoring programs

In developing the Tutoring Assistant Program, we visited many public and private schools and consulted with educators in several eastern states. We found that many remediation staffs and administrators had doubts like our own about using any kind of volunteer teaching.

Could volunteers be trained to be effective remedial assistants?

Would they gossip about their students with other people in the community?

How could volunteers be expected to use professional teaching materials successfully?

Would the task of supervising volunteers take too much of the professional staff's time?

Currently available tutoring programs did not seem to meet many schools' needs. At Spence, we had not found a published program that trained volunteers thoroughly enough and included curriculum materials that were specific enough to enable students at all levels to make notable progress through volunteer tutoring.

Students who are reading, writing, or spelling below grade level need highly focused remediation. Yet in many existing volunteer programs, students simply read books they like or review their homework with an interested adult. This approach can make schoolwork more enjoyable and interesting, but it seldom improves basic component skills so that students can do better on their own. Some published programs attempt to solve this problem by providing a cookbook of varied activities for each skill area and then relying upon the volunteer for most of the curriculum decisions. This approach is more useful for some tutors and students, but for others it can waste precious time and effort, for most volunteer tutors cannot be

expected to choose the right skills to teach and the right methods and materials to use with each student. We found overburdened remedial staffs hesitating to use volunteers because there were no effective systems available to enable them to give adequate supervision to volunteer tutors without sacrificing too much of their own teaching time.

Meeting felt needs

In designing TAP, we made a careful effort to avoid the problems experienced or anticipated in current tutoring programs. Our survey of remediation specialists, principals, and school-volunteer administrators suggested that a remediation program in which volunteers would function effectively as tutors must meet certain needs.

1. The program must provide the supervising staff--whether principal, classroom teacher, or remediation specialist--with a manual that gives specific guidance in establishing and running it and in training and supervising the volunteers.

To meet this need, we developed the TAP Staff Manual.

2. The program must provide training for the tutors that is carefully planned, required for all tutors, and supplemented by a text that is readable and informative.

To meet this need, we developed a sequence of tutor-training seminars with varied, focused learning activities. The seminars are outlined in detail in the TAP Staff Manual, and the text for the tutors is in the Tutoring Assistant Handbook.

3. The program must control the suitability and quality of the teaching methods and materials used for each student, yet it must recognize that a remediation staff does not have time to create new lesson plans and materials or extensively adapt existing ones for the tutors to use.

To meet this need, we developed the TAP curriculum materials: integrated sequences of complete lessons in basic reading, spelling, and handwriting skills, especially designed for tutoring assistants to use. In the TAP Staff Manual, we also provide efficient systems for adapting existing higher-level materials for the tutors to use with students.

4. The staff must plan and review each student's work each week, so that a professional remains in charge of each student's remedial program. This planning and review cannot take much of

the staff's time if the volunteers are to help the staff provide more hours of effective individual teaching.

To meet this need, we developed a "bookkeeping" system for each set of curriculum materials, so that the staff can give the necessary guidance and the tutors can do their reporting through brief notes, dittoed forms, and checklists rather than in lengthy personal conferences and written reports and recommendations.

5. The program must give the students a learning experience that is different from that of the classroom in the following respects.

The student-tutor ratio must be low.

The TAP Center should look and feel different from a classroom.

The teaching tools should be innovative activities, games, and machines rather than texts and workbooks.

Extrinsic rewards must be meaningful and appealing to the students. They must reward improvement in each student's own skills, rather than performance in relation to other students.

To meet these needs, we developed the guidelines described in the TAP Staff Manual.

6. The program must provide remediation that is well received by the entire school--the students, the classroom teachers, the administration, and the parents.

To meet this need, we developed the policies and procedures described in the TAP Staff Manual.

Effective help for more students

Because it uses volunteers, TAP enables a school to provide more hours of effective individual teaching to students who are already in its remedial program. It also enables a school to provide help for a wider range of students: (1) students with a genuine learning disability, (2) able students who have a particular skill deficit, though not an actual disability, and (3) students whose general academic performance is below the school population average, placing an uncomfortable burden on these students to

"keep up." The students who have more severe learning problems work primarily with the remediation staff, with TAP providing vital review. Other students work exclusively with the tutoring assistants, who are advised and supervised by the staff.

In developing and testing TAP, we learned that supervision of the assistants is essential to their training and to effective remediation. A staff person should always be in or near the TAP Center to answer questions and to remind the tutoring assistants by example and by suggestion that a good tutor remembers

- to compliment a student's successes frequently, and rarely to comment upon errors,
- to follow the lesson plans and complete the short evaluation of each session, which guides the staff in planning the student's program,
- to be tactful, calm, and cheerful,
- to focus on the immediate skill goal, and
- never to discuss tutoring matters or individual students' performance outside the TAP Center.

These challenges are not easy to meet, but in the three years of the program's development--involving about 15 tutoring assistants and 50 to 60 students each term--there have been no problems so serious that they have resulted in injury to a student's dignity or to the effectiveness of the learning experience.

Further benefits of TAP

The positive effects of this program go beyond helping more students to improve their reading and writing without increasing the school's expenditures. There are also distinct advantages for both the remediation

staff and the tutoring assistants. In the TAP Center, they can enjoy a variety of teaching and learning experiences. The staff enjoys the opportunity to work individually and intensively with a few students, as well as the experience of planning, supervising, and coordinating the varied remediation programs being carried out by the tutoring assistants. This structure provides the supportive effect of the team approach combined with the freedom to work alone.

TAP also helps the assistants who are parents to provide a better learning atmosphere in their homes for their own children. Their training enables them to be more patient when their children are trying to learn something that is difficult for them, to be more understanding about how slow the learning process can often be and how important it is to take small steps and move slowly in difficult material, and to praise each small success rather than criticize shortcomings.

The tutoring assistants and staff working together in the TAP Center can create a lively atmosphere and a strong sense of mutual support. The exchange of ideas among them enlivens the teaching process for the staff and provides stimulation and encouragement for the assistants. Together they know that when reading or spelling skills improve they have made a difference in what students can achieve and in how the students feel about themselves.

We believe that a program of this kind can provide more students with effective tutoring, relieve the school's remediation staff of the task of trying to provide help for too many students with too few teachers, and give parents and other interested volunteers the opportunity to make a substantial contribution to the education of our young people.

One-Room Schoolhouse Program

by

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Our program tries to provide the following services for students.

1. An ongoing reading and study skills program growing out of a Readak base and utilizing local resources to complement various student reading skills and the reading materials in the various courses
 - a. Unified testing program
 - b. Reading level analysis of existing texts
 - c. Skills in how to "attack" a book
 - d. Skills in how to deal with various teachers--their techniques and their emotions
2. Tutorial for any student feeling the need
 - a. Students with students on own initiative
 - b. Students with students assigned by Academic Council (student-faculty committee)
 - c. Students with teachers on students' initiative
 - d. Students with teachers on teachers' initiative
 - e. Students with outside tutors (paid \$8/hr minimum)
 - (1) Teacher at Stuart Hall
 - (2) Teacher elsewhere
 - (3) Mary Baldwin College student
3. Counseling
 - a. Self-image awareness
 - b. Confidence building, bolstering
 - c. Motivation, stimulation
 - d. Pressure release
4. Supervised study in which 1-3, above, are available, according to need as determined by teachers

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